

## Message Text

UNCLASSIFIED

PAGE 01      SOFIA 01539 260931Z

46

ACTION INR-07

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 CIAE-00 EB-07 COME-00 /027 W

----- 015525

R 260747Z JUL 76

FM AMEMBASSY SOFIA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 1494

INFO AMEMBASSY BERLIN

AMEMBASSY BUCHAREST

AMEMBASSY BUDAPEST

AMEMBASSY PRAGUE

AMEMBASSY WARSAW

UNCLAS SOFIA 1539

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: ELTN, BU

SUBJECT: AUTOMOTIVE INDUSTRY IN BULGARIA (C-ER-6-50147)

REF: STATE 172560

1. FOLLOWING INFORMATION IS KEYED TO QUESTIONS OF  
REFTEL.

A. BULGARIA HAS MOVED AWAY FROM DOMESTIC PRODUCTION AND  
ASSEMBLY OF AUTOMOBILES. ASSEMBLY OF MOSKVICH WAS TO  
TERMINATE AS OF JAN. 1, 1976, BUT STILL CONTINUES ON  
REDUCED SCALE. BULGARIAN ASSEMBLY OF RENAULTS WAS  
DISCONTINUED SEVERAL YEARS AGO, AND VEHICLE INDUSTRY  
IS INCREASINGLY CONFINED TO MANUFACTURE OF CHAVDAR  
BUSES. BULGARIA WILL INCREASINGLY RELY ON IMPORTS FOR  
AUTOMOBILES, WITH MOSKVICH AND ZHIGULI AS THE BASIC  
PERSONAL CAR. THESE, PLUS VOLGA AND POLISH FIATS WILL  
ACCOUNT FOR VIRTUALLY ALL AUTOMOBILES IMPORTED OVER  
THE NEXT FIVE YEARS. WESTERN IMPORTS INCLUDE TRANS-  
CONTINENTAL TRACTORS (MERCEDES, VOLVO) AND A NUMBER  
OF MERCEDES BUSES. A SMALL NUMBER OF MERCEDES PASSENGER  
CARS ARE ALSO IMPORTED.

B. WAITING PERIODS FOR CAR PURCHASE CONTINUE TO BE  
UNCLASSIFIED

UNCLASSIFIED

PAGE 02      SOFIA 01539 260931Z

LONG, AS MANY AS TWO TO THREE YEARS FOR PREFERRED MODELS.

CARS ARE SOLD FOR CASH ONLY. MOSKVICHES COST 6300 LEVA; ZHIGULIS 7200 LEVA. NUMBER OF GAS STATIONS HAS INCREASED AND THERE IS AVERAGE OF ONE STATION PER 30 KM ON MAJOR HIGHWAYS. NUMBER OF STATIONS IN CITIES REMAINS SMALL, REQUIRING LONG WAITS FOR SERVICE. REPAIR FACILITIES ARE INADEQUATE AND "DO-IT-YOURSELF" REPAIR JOBS ARE COMMON.

C. CHANGES IN EFFECTIVE DEMAND FOR AUTOMOBILES ARE DIFFICULT TO ASSESS SINCE BACKLOGS OF BUYERS EQUALIZE SALES AND SUPPLY. OIL PRICE INCREASES HAVE NOT HAD SERIOUS EFFECT ON PERSONAL CONSUMPTION OF PETROLEUM SINCE PUMP PRICES WERE NOT INCREASED SIGNIFICANTLY. RATIONING WAS TEMPORARILY IMPOSED, BUT SUPPLIES ARE NOW SOLD FREELY. (NOTE: ALMOST ALL BULGARIANS USE SOME SORT OF COUPON, MAKING IT IMPOSSIBLE TO DETERMINE WHAT PRICE IS ACTUALLY PAID FOR GASOLINE.)

D. SEVENTH FYP CALLS FOR 26 CARS PER 100 FAMILIES BY 1980, A 63 PERCENT INCREASE OVER 1976 FIGURE (16/100). DURING SIXTH FYP PRIVATE CAR PURCHASES WERE PERMITTED TO OVERFULFILL GOAL BY 23 PERCENT. ACHIEVEMENT OF LONG TERM GOAL OF 40 CARS PER 100 FAMILIES REMAINS IN THE DISTANT FUTURE. INDICATIONS ARE THAT SEVENTH FYP GOALS ARE SOMEWHAT OF A RETRENCHMENT FROM GOALS ESTABLISHED IN THE DECEMBER 1972 PROGRAM.

E--F. SEVENTH FYP CALLS FOR LARGE SCALE EXPANSION OF GASOLINE AND TIRE PRODUCTION. TIRE PRODUCTION IS TO EXPAND BY 50 PERCENT FOR AUTOMOBILES, BY 30 PERCENT FOR HEAVY DUTY TIRES. RE-TREADING CAPACITIES ARE ALSO TO BE INCREASED. BASED UPON 1974-75 BULGARIAN FIGURES, PETROLEUM IMPORTS APPEAR TO BE STABILIZING TO SOME EXTENT. INCREASED GASOLINE OUTPUT WILL BE DUE TO NEW, MORE PRODUCTIVE METHODS OF REFINING. HIGHWAY CONSTRUCTION PROGRAM CALLS FOR EXPANSION OF MAJOR HIGHWAYS AND IMPROVEMENT OF SECONDARY ROADS. MAJOR SEVENTH FYP PROJECTS INCLUDE CONSTRUCTION OF SOFIA-PLOVDIV-VARNA, SOFIA-BURGAS AND BLACK SEA MOTORWAYS AT A COST OF OVER TWO BILLION LEVA. HERZ

UNCLASSIFIED

NNN

## Message Attributes

**Automatic Decaptioning:** X  
**Capture Date:** 01 JAN 1994  
**Channel Indicators:** n/a  
**Current Classification:** UNCLASSIFIED  
**Concepts:** AUTOMOTIVE INDUSTRY  
**Control Number:** n/a  
**Copy:** SINGLE  
**Draft Date:** 26 JUL 1976  
**Decaption Date:** 01 JAN 1960  
**Decaption Note:**  
**Disposition Action:** n/a  
**Disposition Approved on Date:**  
**Disposition Authority:** n/a  
**Disposition Case Number:** n/a  
**Disposition Comment:**  
**Disposition Date:** 01 JAN 1960  
**Disposition Event:**  
**Disposition History:** n/a  
**Disposition Reason:**  
**Disposition Remarks:**  
**Document Number:** 1976SOFIA01539  
**Document Source:** CORE  
**Document Unique ID:** 00  
**Drafter:** n/a  
**Enclosure:** n/a  
**Executive Order:** N/A  
**Errors:** N/A  
**Film Number:** D760286-0697  
**From:** SOFIA  
**Handling Restrictions:** n/a  
**Image Path:**  
**ISecure:** 1  
**Legacy Key:** link1976/newtext/t19760721/aaaaasjy.tel  
**Line Count:** 99  
**Locator:** TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM  
**Office:** ACTION INR  
**Original Classification:** UNCLASSIFIED  
**Original Handling Restrictions:** n/a  
**Original Previous Classification:** n/a  
**Original Previous Handling Restrictions:** n/a  
**Page Count:** 2  
**Previous Channel Indicators:** n/a  
**Previous Classification:** n/a  
**Previous Handling Restrictions:** n/a  
**Reference:** 76 STATE 172560  
**Review Action:** RELEASED, APPROVED  
**Review Authority:** KelleyW0  
**Review Comment:** n/a  
**Review Content Flags:**  
**Review Date:** 19 APR 2004  
**Review Event:**  
**Review Exemptions:** n/a  
**Review History:** RELEASED <19 APR 2004 by ThomasVJ>; APPROVED <27 DEC 2004 by KelleyW0>  
**Review Markings:**

Margaret P. Grafeld  
Declassified/Released  
US Department of State  
EO Systematic Review  
04 MAY 2006

**Review Media Identifier:**  
**Review Referrals:** n/a  
**Review Release Date:** n/a  
**Review Release Event:** n/a  
**Review Transfer Date:**  
**Review Withdrawn Fields:** n/a  
**Secure:** OPEN  
**Status:** NATIVE  
**Subject:** AUTOMOTIVE INDUSTRY IN BULGARIA (C-ER-6-50147)  
**TAGS:** ELTN, BU  
**To:** STATE  
**Type:** TE  
**Markings:** Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 04 MAY 2006